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OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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THE NAME OF JESUS.

‘Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that, at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’—PHIL. ii., 9-11.

This is a prophecy, not formal and official. It is an outburst of the expression of feeling—one of those royal insights which were so peculiar to the Apostle Paul. The long track of history passed over, the whole race’s development and consummation ended, he saw things as they would appear beyond, in the final sphere and full disclosure above. And then there should be one Name that was mightier, more magical, more marvelous, more blessed than every other name in the universe. That should be the name of Jesus. Then, in the praise of that Name, every joy and ecstasy would break forth spontaneously and irresistibly. Then, in that universal admiration and adoration of praise offered to Christ would be a glory attributed to the Eternal Father himself.

So much for the substance of the declaration. Now let us begin and follow this thought up.

In its lowest use, a name is a sign affixed to a thing for the purpose of separating it in our regard or representation from every other thing. After a while, in the progress of time, by use, a name not simply signifies the thing which it represents, but comes also to have in it, and to convey to those that hear it, a notion of that which inheres in the thing. It rises from a mere physical appellation, and begins to have an interior sense. And then, naturally, it is applied to qualities themselves. Or rather, the name of a thing, when pronounced, conveys the idea, not so much of the thing itself, as of its quality.

Both of these are combined when names are applied to persons. In regard to persons, they are at first the simple means of identifying different ones. They separate one man from another, and are signs of separateness and individuality. Thus, a list of names in a

directory conveys very little impression except of so many separate persons. It gives very little notion of character. It suggests very little idea of association. A list of letters in a post-office, if we knew the persons, would, when the names were pronounced, stir up in our minds a thousand thoughts of their dispositions, and of their histories, and of their relations, and of the incidents connected with them; but as we read them without that knowledge, we merely think of numbers as applied to persons. So a roll of names of soldiers, a series of names set down in any way, merely conveys to us an idea of the individuality and separateness of the person mentioned from the mass.

Our own name means more to us than any other, of course; and it comes to mean more and more in proportion as we actually grow, whether within or without; whether our development is in the sense of relation to external things, or whether it is in manhood, and has relation to invisible qualities.

We are not conscious of how full of nerves our separate names are. We are not conscious of how much of pride, and hope, and joy, and fear, and love, is subtly connected with the sentence in which our own personal name is pronounced.

If you touch the name, you touch the soul itself, often, and send it forth in flight, sometimes in one, and sometimes in another direction, according to circumstances.

Perhaps some of you saw on exhibition not many years ago, in New York, a singularly effective though realistic picture of a prison such as might have been seen in France during the French Revolution, in which all the half-lighted, vaulted space was filled full of persons—men, women, and children—very noble many of them—many of them historic. On the back side of the picture the door stood open; and there were the grim and savage officers; and there was a French functionary or official standing with a list of names, and calling them off. They were the names of the prisoners who were to go out to be guillotined that morning. And as the sounds fell upon the ears of the hundreds that were huddled together there, what do you suppose was the effect of the pronunciation of them? What were their names to those prisoners then? How much did they suggest to them, not only of their own selves, but of all their hopes, and of all their future, and of all their relations to one and another, to life, and to time, and to eternity itself? And all these feelings were started because the names, pronounced in connection with a certain time and purpose, touched every single chord in their souls—some with horror, and some with gladness (for such were men's sufferings then that they were glad to die).

I recollect one day when I had been traveling alone in the Alps (for the sake of that additional luxury we had parted), that, after I had been for some hours without company in that strange land, where I was surrounded by very unfamiliar and novel scenes, and where only a foreign language was spoken about me, I heard, fall down as it were out of the air, my own name, spoken so cheerily, so buoyantly, that I was utterly bewildered. Of course I did not suppose that angels were troubling themselves with me; but I knew that it must have come from somewhere above me. I was climbing up; and, turning in the road, very soon I saw revealed to me the welcome face and familiar form of a friend from New England, whom I did not know was absent from home. He was coming from the other direction, and, looking down, he had seen me. I never knew what I should feel like when I was reduced to an absolute abstraction until that hour, when my name was pronounced under such circumstances. It produced in me a bewilderment and whirl of feeling. I knew not whether it boded good or bad, joy or sorrow. Whether it came from friend or foe I could not tell. It caused a total inward awakening or agitation such as I had never experienced before. A man's name takes hold of a thousand inward chords, and may be so pronounced that almost every nerve and sensibility of his being shall be thrilled with it.

One of the most matchless scenes in the New Testament history is connected with this, where after he came forth on that blessed morning, Jesus walked in the garden, and Mary, the most devoted of all the women, could not see him because of her tears (for people's griefs are very apt to hide from them the presence of the Comforter), and she said to him, supposing he was the gardener, "Sir, if thou hast taken him away, tell me where thou hast laid him," and he who had spoken with her, and had not been recognized by her, simply pronounced her name, "Mary!" and with that she cried out, in an ecstasy of remembrance and of love and of gladness, "Rabboni!" and would have clasped his feet. The whole scene is too dramatic to be interpreted. Read it, and if you do not feel it, nobody can interpret it to you. The whole force of this scene was in the line of the history of her heart or past associations, and of all her hopes, and all her longings, and all the visions and aspirations which his company and teaching had inspired in her. These had been buried with him. And she stood before him, and he talked with her, and not a single chord vibrated until he struck her name; then her whole life burst out like the morning.

Our names, then, stand intimately connected, not simply with our persons and our qualities, but, as we have seen, with our own

personal experience with character, with dispositions, with all manner of mental traits. But in the progress of time, names come not simply to stand for things and the qualities of things, for character and the qualities of character, but rise from the specific and the individual, and take on generic forms. Or rather, personality may become so large as to seem a genus, and not a species—still less an individual.

Thus, the names of men of action in the world remain, and they interpret, to those who use them, whole periods of history, or whole departments of human development. Where men have had to do with human affairs in such ways as to prove themselves to be pre-eminently masters in any direction, their name not only identifies them as particular individuals in history, but identifies them with whole complex developments of affairs in history. It signifies what a man has fashioned. Thus the word *Cæsar* remains to-day to mark a quality. *Cæsarism* indicates certain ideas, or a certain department, or a certain genus. Alexander is another such name. Bonaparte is another. Bismarck, with his extraordinary mind, is another, and will be so in times to come, even to a greater extent than now. And many other distinguished persons might be singled out to show that a man's name does not stop with his personality, nor with the qualities of his disposition, but that it goes on to signify large departments of history which have been particularly associated with him. A man's name, then, does not so much stand for him individually, as for the great departments of affairs in which he has acted. Numberless examples of this will suggest themselves to you. The great philosophers and giants of intellect have left their names as historic landmarks. Art and beauty are also represented by names. In other words, there have been names so associated with these things that when we think of them, we do not so much think of the persons, as the scenes in which they acted, or the realms which they created. To those who are familiar with art in antiquity, such great names as Phidias, and Raphael, and Titian, and Albert Dürer, and many others like them, who might be named, do not stop either with the individuals, or with the narration of their history, but with their suggestion of certain great departments of civilization and refinement and philosophy.

The same is true in respect to the reverse qualities. There are names in which we have stored up almost all that we ever thought of which is hateful and hideous. Judas is a receptacle of whatever is base to our thought; Nero of whatever is brutal in cruelty; Macchiavelli of whatever is malignant and selfish and cunning in craftiness; Arnold of whatever is wicked and base in an unpatriotic soul;

and Jeffreys of whatever is false and corrupt and oppressive in judicial stations. So names signify moral qualities, and departments of them.

Now, out of this thought we begin to come near to some conception of what our text has declared. That by reason of his own personal character and history, God should give to Jesus a name, is a large idea. A day shall come when Christ's name shall stand in the Universe as the suggestion of all that is most beautiful, most lovely, most admirable, strong, intelligent, and effective in executiveness; of whatever thought, and whatever quality, and whatever sentiment we have kindled in us which is connected with any special name in its lower forms. We shall come to a day when we shall find that in that one Name we rise above all others, and that it comprehends in itself that which on earth has been distributed through ten thousand minor names, each carrying some separate quality, some single affection or disposition, or some department of qualities or affections. There shall be a Name so large, so full, that it shall include in it the sum of all development during the whole period of time.

It is indeed a Name above every name. In the evolution of time the experiences of mankind are growing more and more into association with that Name. The best things which for the last two thousand years have taken place, have gathered themselves around about that Name. Bad as has been the handling of religion; base as has been much of the history of the Church that undertook to minister religion; corrupt as have been many of the hierarchs; recreant as have been many of the men who have enlisted under the banner of Christ; dark, cruel, bloody, hideous, infernal, as have been many of the suggestions and the associations and the experiences of the Christian Church, such was the power of Christ, the beauty of Christ, that his name has risen above them all. And the best, the sweetest, the purest, the noblest things, the things best worth living for or dying for, are still associated with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In spite of his ministers, in spite of his churches, in spite of all the malignity that has been manifested under the cloak of that Name, its innate quality and power and its fruits have been such that it has come down to us, after all, full of the sweetest suggestions of the most transcendently beautiful things. And yet, we are ourselves dim-eyed, and short-sighted, and we see through vapors, and have never seen him clearly. We have seen him as through a glass darkly. And in the small tract over which the race has passed since his coming, in the little evolution that has taken place among the race since then, it has not been Christ in the

body that exhibited Christ, but Christ in the great mass of the human race, uplifting them in their multiplex and multiform relations in life. His name has steadily gained power. Even they who theologically disown it, morally receive it, and call it transcendent. They believe in it who do not believe the Book, nor the supernatural elements in it. They who deny divinity, and claim that Jesus was but an extraordinary man, a moral genius, readily and willingly advance him to the forefront. And if that be the ascription of those who do not enter into sympathy with him, or with his name, as advanced or advancing, what shall be the ascription of those who are in sympathy with him, and with the best conceptions of things moral and spiritual?

But more in detail. In the last great vision—the final and enduring one—of Christ, the intellectual treasures with which the universe will then be acquainted will center toward him, so that his name will stand in connection with all that we on earth call philosophy; with all the treasures of knowing, among men; with all the bounties of combination in the human intellect. Whatever there is to be that is resplendent, answering to our earthly conception of intellectual force and achievement, will stand connected with his name above every other.

The truth, the beauty, the refinement of the moral sentiments, carried through every phase, through every combination, through every conceivable adaptation, with all the force that inspiration can give to them, and in heroic forms, shall stand connected with Jesus Christ. And what is this but saying that when we shall see him as he is, and he shall be revealed to us in all his thought, and feeling, and life, then we shall perceive that he is connected by his history with all forms of moral heroism? As Raphael's history connects him with the most exquisite things in art; as Cæsar's name connects him with the most efficient things in military life; as Michael Angelo's skill with the chisel connects him with the noblest conceptions which man has formed of statuary; as many a thinker is connected, by reason of his relations and investigations in the sphere of philosophy and thought with the brightest achievements of human genius, so, when we behold at last the full personality of the Lord Jesus Christ, he will be One of such moral relations, and his history will be found to have so associated itself with everything that is most resplendent in intellectual thought, and research, and execution, and combination, and creative force, that that which is the noblest, and most transcendent in truth, in honor, in sublime faith, in self-denial, in meekness, in humility, will be embraced therein, and that his name will be verily a Name above every name.

If we say *meekness*, we think of that person who is the meekest; if we say *moral courage*, it suggests to our minds one who is characterized by that quality; if we say *disinterested love*, we are reminded of another who has boundless philanthropy; and if we say *philosophy*, it is still another that we think of. There is no one person on earth who is big enough to carry all these guns. Most men are like gun-boats, carrying one heavy gun which swings round and round, and with which they do most of their fighting, the rest being done with small arms. Often great men are great in single or but few directions. None are completely rounded out in their manhood. But when we come to see the one Man who is above every other man—the great typical Man, who represents the race—he will be shown to have so touched human life and human experience on every conceivable side, that his name will suggest that which we look for now distributively among all men.

So all the qualities which are suggested to us here by the affections—as tenderness, and gentleness, and patience, and sweetness, and the beauty and rapture of love—will be found so centered in Jesus, that in the last revelation of himself, when we go where he is, and see him as he is, they will stand in his name. His name will shake down associations of these things upon our heads with the sweetest perfume. When we shall see him as he is, then, whatever we have thought of distributively on earth as noble, as pure, as true, as sweet, as grand, as inconceivable in perfection, but dimly foreshadowed; whatever we have thought of as courage, as skill, as justice; whatever we have thought of as grand in poetry, in art, and in eloquence; whatever in sovereignty; whatever in taste or in beauty; whatever we have thought of as admirable in rulers or in subjects; whatever has called forth our admiration in men or in women, in grown persons or in children; whatever we have thought of as beautiful in picture or statue; whatever we have thought of as heroic on the field or on the road; whatever we have thought of as glorious in aspiration and achievement—when we shall see Him as he is, then these things, distributed through the race, and seen but as sprouting germs, we shall trace back to Him, the Fountain and Sum of them all.

So that if you, a great artist, die, and rise and come into his presence with your best conceptions of art, and commune with him, you will find that you have conversed with the supremest Artist, and you will be filled with rapture of admiration.

Or, are you a just judge, sitting as high upon the sphere of honor as one well may sit in this life; and are all your thoughts disciplined and drilled in such directions? When you rise to be-

hold, through those avenues by which you may best understand, your wonder and amazement will be, to find in him the royalty of those qualities which on earth you never dreamed to exist in such perfection—not even in the ideal days of prophecy.

Ye who think of death as the end of love—as the quenching of the torch of affection; ye who think of tenderness as belonging to these mortal scenes; ye who mourn the growing of your children, because as they grow to man's estate their ten thousand sweet and witching little ways of love will perish out of the household—O wife-heart! O mother-heart! O lover-heart! rising in the last day, in that Name shall be more treasure, and more exquisite beauty, and more inflections of love, than it ever entered into your heart to conceive. And all the witching graces and developments of life, looked back upon by memory in its fondest mood, shall seem to you but as a tangled wilderness of weeds, compared with the garden of the Lord.

Is it discourse by philosopher? None shall have such sweet discourse as He. Or is it the power of him that speaks? No orator shall have such power as He. From him came all things. "Without him was not anything made that was made." Or, is it the refinement of the imagination, or the suggestions of a chastened and exalted fancy? Do not, because, owing to your early training, religion has seemed so acerb and so rigid; do not, because religion, as you have been accustomed to think of it, has been full of *thou shalt not*s, and because *shall not* is written upon every sweet and shining temptation; do not, because you have been shut up to days and ceremonials—do not, for these reasons, transfer your false notions of religion to the higher life.

How hideous, I might almost say, was heaven as it used to be interpreted to my childish imagination! It was a prison. It was built, to be sure, of beautiful things; but a prison is a prison though it be built of alabaster, or silver, or gold. It was a place devoid of the freedom and the enjoyments of home. It was wanting in those elements which make life joyous and happy. And if heaven be a place of propriety; if it be a place in which everybody is regimented; if it be a place where, at stated times, we shall turn and bow one way, and then turn and bow the other way, and say our prayers, and repeat our hymns—if that be heaven, it is a mechanical heaven; it is an automaton's heaven; it is a machine-heaven; it is a mechanician's heaven, and a poor one at that. But to me heaven is not such a place. I gather, to represent my heaven, whatever there is that is most resplendent on earth. When I paint my picture of heaven, I borrow from the clouds; I borrow from the morning

and the evening; I borrow from the severe grandeur of the winter, and the luscious luxuriance of summer. When I portray my heaven, and its population, I take whatever on earth is most lithe, most bewitching, most genial, and sweetest in nature and society. I select for my sitters those that are the noblest-browed; those that I would go farthest to see; those that excite in me the most wonder and rapture. I get together all these treasures, and with them I depict my heaven.

But these are only the accessories. There is a Name in which reside all the qualities that inspired these things.

And my Saviour is One with whom I long to be most intimate, and in whose presence I shall be most rapturously happy, and ineffably blessed. And whatever direction I take—if I go to the east or to the west, to the north or to the south, upward or downward—there is my Christ with me. Whither shall I flee from thy presence, O Chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely?

I have not far to go to satisfy you that if there be such a thing as a name that covers the whole round of human faculties, that fills itself full of the best associations of our best hours, it will go infinitely beyond the most instructed human experience. And I need not say what the effect of such a Name would be.

I never saw a triumphant scene that had not a minor chord in it. I remember, as if it were but yesterday, the time when Kossuth made his magnificent passage from Castle Garden up through Broadway. I remember the surging of the people. I remember the wealth of enthusiasm that was manifested. I remember the helplessness of that roar which rolled like a storm-wave upon the shore of the ocean, and which seemed feeble and unimpressive as compared with what the people wanted to do. And I could not help feeling how the human heart longs for something to worship. I could not but think how, when you bring before men, embodied, that which answers to their conception of heroism, their whole soul goes out yearning for it. Men who are not good, long to see people who are good. Men who are inexpert, love to gaze upon expert men. Cowards like to see heroes. And all humanity, by its very consciousness of weakness, by its very infirmities, by the dim light of its aspirations, longs to find something that is divine. There are things in every man that are reaching out after the God.

And so, when these qualities and tendencies of our nature have been gathered up, as it were; when they have been trained; when they drop from the stem on which they were carried during their first stages; when we are brought into the other life under other conditions, where that which is best in us shall have the first chance,

and that which is worst in us is left behind, and we stand in the presence of this royal Person whose name is connected with everything that is transcendent and noble in our conceptions, need I say what will be the result? Need I say that there will be a fulfilling of the declaration:

“God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth”?

a Name which, being pronounced, as it were makes the very universe quiver with spontaneous and irresistible enthusiasm.

It will touch every chord of sensibility. The very memory of sorrow and of joy combining the rapture of the ennobled in the heavenly land; the fulfilling of all dim thoughts and hopes; the reappearing of everything that was lost and seemingly annihilated to us; all which the heart has felt of ecstasy—these shall be so connected with the Lord Jesus Christ that he will seem to be the embodiment of all those things which we have most dimly thought of as possibilities, and longed for. There our Brother, our typical Head, the man Christ Jesus will stand bodying forth to us the whole of the existence of that which is possible in such a being as ours. And the participation of it, the associations of it, will bring every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess that he is Lord. And it will be a spontaneous homage. It will be a homage rendered, not because you must render it, but because you cannot help it.

It is also affirmed that in that day and hour the rapture of the universe in the presence of that name, or that person Jesus, will be the greatest honor that can be conferred upon God the Father.

“God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

I have seen in the thicket little birds, that had caught and fastened themselves, and that, while their companions were out among the leaves, or above them singing in the clear blue, fluttered and strove, but could not free themselves; and I have seen many sweet and tender hearts that longed to pray to Christ Jesus, but that were so bewildered with the questions that had thrallled them, that they did not dare to pay divine honors to that sacred name. It is to you I come, bringing to-day this glorious emancipation. I do not ask you to accept one view or another; but I do ask you to hear me while I declare this: *God has exalted Jesus to the forefront of the universe; and he has given him a name which is above every other name to you and to your thought; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, of things*

under the earth, of things throughout the universe ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Go as far as that, and I will not trouble you any farther. You need not reason ; you need not undertake to settle a thousand questions of theology ; but if, looking upon Jesus, your heart longs to ascribe glory and honor and praise to him, and if you want to worship him, there is your charter—there is your liberty. For, can one be condemned in the great hour of disclosure who rises and says, “I bowed the knee, and I confessed that Jesus was Lord : it was in obedience to that command, that I might honor the Father”?

How does it honor him ? I do not know. You do not know. You will see by and by how it honors him. But if there is one truth sweetly patent in the Bible, it is this : that if any ransomed soul wants to ascribe to Christ everything that one soul can ascribe to another, there is an open door to do it. Here is permission for it. It is no idolatry.

Do you suppose that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, sit in such niggling jealousy that they grudge to each other the affections of men on earth ? Do you suppose that there is any such feeling of loftiness or superiority among the Persons of the God-Head that if any soul wants to give a rapturous expression of its love to the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, he is tripped up by some jealousy between them ? To suppose any such thing as this is to ascribe the meanest feelings to the highest divine existences.

Then love, worship, bow down, until there is no thought or feeling in you that will bow any lower than it bows to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot make that name more blessed than God is making it ; nor can you ascribe any divine attribute to it that has not already been ascribed to it. So come out of your bondage, out of your dialectical state, out of your thrall, and be delivered forever and forever from the power of sin and Satan. Go with your tribute to the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be accepted. If you do not know how to manage it, God knows to manage it for you.

We shall, perhaps, derive further instruction, if, leaving these higher thoughts, we begin again at the lower point. I have endeavored, by some few faint words and images, to give you an idea of what this name of Christ is, and is to be. And the question recurs, What is the name of Christ now ? What is it to you ? To many persons the name of Christ is a mere mnemotechnic symbol for historical purposes—simply a word for a date.

With others, the name of Jesus Christ is a word of superstition. Their Christ is that which narrows them. To them the name of

Christ is only another name clothing the poorest ideas of morality and of authority. There is very little in it that is exhilarating to them. There is very little to it that touches in them the chords of gratitude, of enthusiasm, or any form of heroism.

To others it is a Name of controversy. As they regard it, it is full of suspicions and bitternesses and divisions. And so, again His heart is pierced. Again His raiment is divided. There are many whose only thought of the New Testament is as of a magazine of artillery. There is no sweetness in texts, to their taste. They value them merely as clubs to be hewn for the conflict which they are waging. The wondrous beauty of the love of Christ, of his words themselves, are but so much metal with which they forge swords and armor and breastplates as they go out against each other in theological controversy. The garden of the Lord, the exquisite beauty of the New Testament, is as if the wild boar of the forest had desolated it. On the very tree of life he whets his tusks, that he may go into belluine and savage warfare.

I know of nothing which seems more offensive to me than the associations which I have but just got over, connected with texts of the New Testament which should rise up as so many fair pictures to us—as so many flowers in the peaceful meadows. And over these very scenes in which the life of Christ is opened, that it might come to our heart or imagination and inspire and guide us in the best feelings of our life—over all these tranquil scenes fierce war has raged; and every part of the battle-field in the four Gospels, almost, is redolent, not so much of Christ as of the controversies about Christ which have prevailed in the Christian church. Happy will be those ages in which the associations of the New Testament are not controversial.

Far higher than these are those associations which I trust many of you are not unfamiliar with in your own personality and experience and history, by which your childhood is connected with Christ. Blessed is that household which has an interpreting father or mother whose heart prophesies to the children the best things of the God-head on the side of love and lovingness; and unhappy is that household who have no heaven, though they hope one day to earn one—those children whose calling and election has not yet been made sure; those children who are bowed down with weakness and heart-sickness and disconsolateness from immaturity and unripeness, and yet have no Mediator, no brooding God, and no mother-heart in God.

Many children have no God. Many children have a God that is metamorphosed and made into a demon. The God of many children seems to be without the element of love to them. He seems

to be a God of severity, of sternness, of wrath. They hope one day to be able to placate him, to get on the sunny side of him. And then they think they will be happy. But now it is Winter to them, and they are on the north side of him. Blessed are they who have outgrown any such experience as this, having found the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

How many of you have associations connected with Christ which make him to you what he is said to be in the Scriptures; so that you can say, as the people of Samaria said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of the things which thou didst tell us, but because we have seen Him ourselves"?

How many have had a revelation of Christ in sorrow, in yearnings, in suspense, in anguish, in raptures of joy, in attainment, in strife, in defeat, and in victory! How many persons are there whose lives have been lives that seemed to be explorations in that direction, and whose thought of Christ is intimately connected with their whole warfare, brought to their own personality!

But by and by all these other names will fail. By and by the name of superstition will cease, and the name of controversy will cease, and the name of philosophy will cease, and the name of private and personal experience will cease, and we shall rise into a common inheritance of that Name which is above every name—fuller, nobler, grander, more powerful; of that Name which is full of fiery inspiration to every part of our nature; which gives unity to our whole scattered life; and which shall gather us into our own individuality, and make us kings and priests unto God; of that Name which shall have molded and perfected a true manhood in us. And then we shall stand before the sovereign King of all that we are and hope to be.

The day cannot be far away when that Name shall come to you, filling the heaven, filling every avenue of joy and wonder and surprise. What has life here to be compared with that? Why are we so anxious to live? Why do we take the broken fragments, the scattered elements, and think them such treasure that we do not desire to go up to the mountain from which they came? Why should we be so delighted with a little spark of beauty, that we should not desire to see the flame of beauty from which it sprang? Why should we cling to the imperfect forms of goodness about us, and not desire to see the only perfect form?

Speed, then, O days! Hasten, O night of life! Let the Winter pass. Come, O Spring!—that better spring, when the Sun of

Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings, and we shall know as we are known, and be forever with the Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We ask thy help, our heavenly Father, that we may gain release from our own ignorance, and that, under the inspiration of thy Spirit, we may rise to some such thought of thee as shall fill our hearts with gladness, and inspire us with hope and with love. We thank thee that thou art bringing us, by a thousand influences, through grace, through providence, and through the ministration of strength in us, toward that estate of blessedness which they have who are in thy presence, and who see thee as thou art, and forever dwell with thee. On this tumultuous earth is yet sighing. Groans and pains are yet here. Here, is change. Here, hope rushes to disappointment, and conceptions come untimely to blight. And we are glad that just before us is a land where all expectation is more than fulfilled; where all things are perfect, or growing toward perfection; where harmony has suppressed all difference, and sorrow and sighing have fled away; where there are no more tears, and where there is no more pain nor sickness, forever. We rejoice that there is a light above our darkness; that there is eternal day burning unconsumed forever; and that all the tendencies of life are thitherward. In spite of what we see, in spite of what we hear, in spite of all that is evil, and all the causes that are working to destroy, and all that maketh pain and suffering, we rejoice that we may believe in a Redeemer. Thou, O Saviour! art not for the few. Thou art the One of ages. The circuit of thy being is infinite, and thy word is not less, and thou art going according to thine own way, yet undisclosed to us, step by step, through the periods of time, and art working out gloriously, beyond all comprehension of men, thy plans, and their eternal good. The wilderness shall bud and blossom as the rose. The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head.

We are as those that are lost in the wilderness. We long to behold the garden-time. We listen to hear the voice that shall call us from our winter. We wait for the end which we cannot see, but which we feel pressing us, and leading us in the right way. We rejoice that our faith is so much more comforting than our sight. We ask to be delivered from the thrall of our senses, and from those lower reasonings which belong to these mortal bodies in contact with this material world. We ask for that power of faith by which we shall be able to realize the invisible and the ineffable. We ask that we may be lifted by inspiration into that realm where we shall reason according to higher things. We pray for that rest, we pray for that confidence, we pray for that hope, which endures through the night. We pray for God in us; for Immanuel; for the divine consolation; for thy forgiveness; for the cleansing of thy Spirit; for that food which thou art to every hungry soul; for that water of life by which thou dost quench evil desire, and satisfy holy yearning.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt grant unto every one of us this realization of thee, this sense of sonship, and this glorious certitude that nothing shall separate from God those that love him through the Lord Jesus Christ. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt, according to the infinite mercy of thine own heart, and not according to the wisdom of our understanding, nor according to the wisdom of our supplication, grant unto

us all the things which we need. Wilt thou guide us by thy providence. Wilt thou ordain the events that surround us at home and abroad. Wilt thou grant that from day to day, all the multiform affairs that come, we know not whence, and rush, we know not whither, may work for good to us. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt ripen us, and that we may see in ourselves the growing savor of the early summer.

We pray for all that are distressed in mind; for all that look backward upon the waste of life, upon its innumerable mistakes, and bemoan themselves. And we pray that their sense of inferiority and sinfulness may not bring discouragement. May they look to their Physician, and for their trouble find remedy in him.

We pray for all that are troubled and bereaved, and that are mourning over sorrows fresh made. We pray that thou wilt appear to every one of them, and that thou wilt minister to their souls that consolation which men cannot give, and which, when thou hast imparted it, men cannot take away.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be very near to those who feel sensible, to-day, that they are not under God's guidance. If there are any who stand upon perilous places where they may in a moment be overwhelmed and destroyed, and who know it, and who hardly know where to look, we beseech of thee that they may feel that thou art near to them, cooling their temper of passion; that thou art near to them giving stability to their better purposes, and inspiring them with a higher and holier life.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to those who are tempted, and who have been snared by temptation, and who, yet, are not corrupted nor carried away utterly. Oh, may they be restored to thee. May they be delivered from the devourer, and be brought back to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt be near to those on whom rest heavy burdens. Grant that as their day is, so their strength may be. And grant that they who are perplexed, and seem wearing out with care, may learn the divine art of casting their burden on the Lord. Wilt thou sustain them, and give them clearness of judgment. Grant them wisdom of purpose, and patience in execution; and more and more may they learn how to use the world as not abusing it; and how to reap advantage among their fellow-men without destroying; and how to live and labor by their higher and nobler nature, and not by the ministration of their lower feelings.

And we beseech of thee, O Lord, our God! that thou wilt grant that more and more we may learn to be bound to one another in a truer sympathy. May we interpret, not from the side of hatred, but from the side of charity. May we not be armed against men with impulses combative and destructive; but may we be more and more meek and sympathizing and all-healing in our desires. We pray for the prevalence of the spirit of Christ. We pray that we may feel his presence, though not in any tangible and visible form, yet diffused, according to his gracious promise, in the household and in the hearts of his people. And we beseech of thee that we may discern the beginnings of heaven even upon earth.

We pray for all those that are not with us to-day, but that think of us—some from beds of sickness; some from watching-places, where they are waiting patiently upon those that are sick; some from upon the sea and its tossing waves; and some from sanctuaries of the wilderness, from forests, afar off.

Grant, to-day, heavenly food, heavenly light, and heavenly fire, to all those who are of this household of faith. And may the mercy of God, which already we feel, and which yet more we supplicate, go everywhere, among

all those hearts which are united to ours by the sympathy of love. And we pray that thou wilt bless those in our midst who are laboring for the young, for the ignorant, for the outcast, for the wanderer. We pray that thou wilt never let their zeal fail. May they not be weary in well-doing. And may they that water be themselves watered of God. And we pray that thus they may find that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

We pray for the children. Will the Lord grant that they may grow up in strength, in manliness, and in virtue. May they grow up to love their country, and to love their fellow-men of every land, with a larger Christian patriotism, and with a larger charity for mankind than we have had. We pray that they may be saved from vice; from all the evils of inexperience; from the waste and wear of all passions; and may they grow up confirmed in virtue and in piety, to do nobler work, in a nobler way. We long for the time when the earth shall be crowned with a better generation of men, and when living and life shall be purer and grander. We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt not let the years delay, but make haste and come; for the whole earth is weary with waiting. How much is yet dark! How much is but in twilight! How much of that which is in twilight promises but a cloudy day! Come, Lord Jesus, to complete thy work; to advance the conditions of men; to perfect the glorious things which thou hast spoken by the mouth of the prophets. Bring in the latter-day glory, when there shall be no war, and no misunderstandings, and no animosities, and no separations; and no envyings, and no jealousies, and no malign feelings; but when joy, and peace, and purity, and truth, and meekness, and gentleness, shall have possession of the whole earth.

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
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